

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the Official Action dated July 08, 2003 and the indication of allowable subject matter. The above amendment and remarks to follow are intended to be fully responsive thereto.

Claims 7 and 8 were objected to because it was unclear whether the different "means" recited in these claims were related. Applicant has amended these claims to clarify the issue raised by the Examiner. No new matter has been entered.

Claims 1, 3 and 6-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizuno in view of Watson (6,414,455) and Uchinami (JP 08051795). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizuno, Watson, Uchinami as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Boillat (4,791,345). Claim 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizuno, Watson, Uchinami as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Bartel (5,762,384).

The Examiner indicated that claim 4 would be allowable if rewritten into independent form to include all of the limitations of base claim 1. In an effort to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations of allowable claim 4.

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Applicant has also added the limitations of allowable claim 4 into independent claim 1. No new issues have been raised by the amendment to claim 7 because the allowability of the limitations of claim 4 is not changed by the amendment combining claims 4 and 7.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Patent Examiner contact the undersigned in the event that the Examiner determines that no issues have been raised by the above amendment.

It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-9, as amended, define the invention over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance, and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner believe further discussion regarding the above claim language would expedite prosecution they are invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted:

By:



Matthew W. Stavish
Reg. No. 36,286

Liniak, Berenato & White
Suite 240
6550 Rock Spring Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
(301) 896-0600